

**Connecticut Association of Community Pharmacies, Inc.**

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**Testimony for the Joint Committee of Public Health**

**On HB 371 AAC The Administration of Injectable Vaccines to Adults in  
Pharmacies**

**March 16, 2011**

Good morning Chairpersons Gerratana and Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Ben Davis and I work for Walgreens. I am a pharmacist and I have trained hundreds of Walgreens pharmacists in CT over the past 4 years to immunize.

My testimony is provided on behalf of the members of the Connecticut Association of Community Pharmacies. We truly support the goal of Raised Bill No. 371 to expand the immunizations that licensed pharmacists are permitted to administer to adults in Connecticut.

To date, Walgreens has 94 pharmacy locations and 326 immunizing pharmacists in CT.

From September 1, 2011 - February 29, 2012 we administered approximately 58,000 immunizations in CT. 94% of the vaccinations were for flu, 2% Pneumonia, and 4% was for Zostavax. Many of the recipients were State Employees, due to the recent changes in the State Employee Plan that allows them to receive flu immunizations at pharmacies. We have had nothing but success and as you can see by the statistics, our customers would like more.

We applaud the sponsor of Senate Bill 371 and the Joint Committee for holding a hearing on this important legislation that will help to expand the access of the adult residents of Connecticut to vaccination services from their neighborhood community pharmacies and pharmacists. However, we have concerns with the restriction that would require two pharmacists to be working in the pharmacy.

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Pharmacists are valuable members of the health care team and have an important role in providing immunization services. Pharmacists are highly educated through the schools of pharmacy to provide patient care services, and they are well-prepared through their education, training, and experience to provide immunization services.

Community pharmacies play a key role in providing patients with easily accessible and convenient immunizations services to help reduce the number of inadequately vaccinated Americans. Despite the availability of effective immunizations, many Americans remain unvaccinated and susceptible to vaccine-preventable diseases. The most recent information from the CDC shows that many U.S. residents remain unvaccinated against preventable infectious illnesses resulting in all health care providers to work to improve vaccination rates. Pharmacists have a significant role in improving vaccination rates.

Community pharmacies are an important resource for patients to receive information on immunizations and provide patients with easily accessible, convenient and cost effective locations for immunization services. In addition, reports have shown that states allowing pharmacist immunizations versus those states that do not, have a statistically significantly greater percentage of vaccinated patients. In addition, with the recent cuts to Medicaid and State Employees moving to mail order, this service will help keep CT pharmacies viable.

In closing, we ask that the bill as currently drafted be amended to remove the unnecessary requirement that the pharmacy must have more than one licensed pharmacy working in the pharmacy when a vaccine is administered. Pharmacists have been safely administering immunizations to patients across the U.S. for a number of decades, with no other state having this a requirement. Other health care providers do not have such a requirement. When a patient sees their physician, there is no requirement for another physician to be available. We urge the Committee to agree to remove this requirement and recognize that this added resource burden on pharmacies is not appropriate.

We also ask that the legislation be amended to clarify that pharmacists may administer CDC listed immunizations in accord with the Food and Drug Administration approved prescribing information. Thank you for your leadership and for consideration of our comments.